



52. Just when the interpreter rushed up to the bridge, the "head boatman" grabbed him and yelled: "Mister, please tell me who is right."



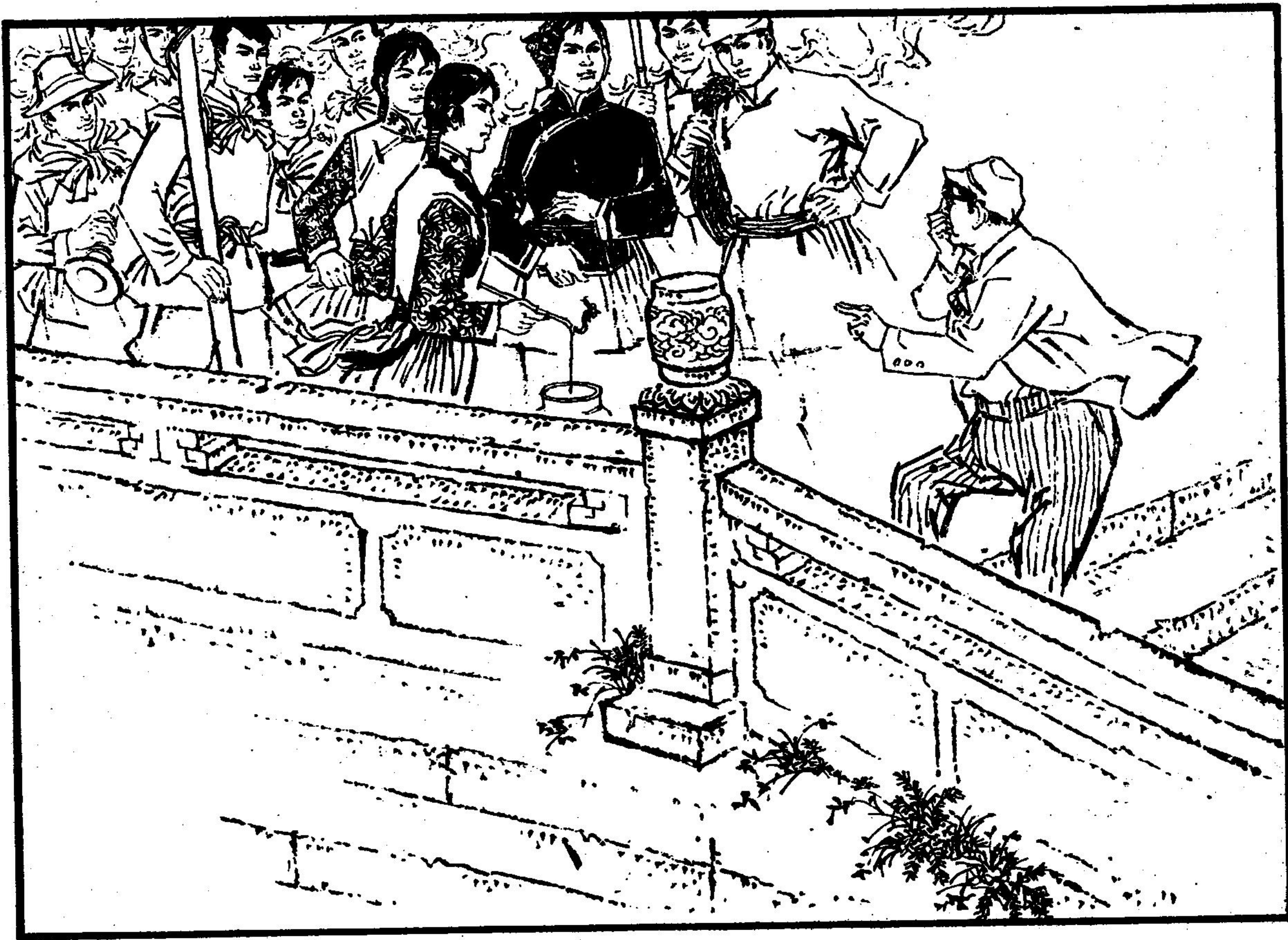
53. The "matron of honour" laughed and said sarcastically: "Ask about his opinions? You must be joking! Everything now is upside down. Who's going to believe whom?"



54. The "head boatman" angrily said: "You refuse to take the right road and instead waste your time here causing trouble. Why don't you drop dead!"



55. The "matron" pointed at the "head boatman" but her eyes were fixed on the interpreter. "You go your way and I'll go mine," she said. "No one will bother anyone else."



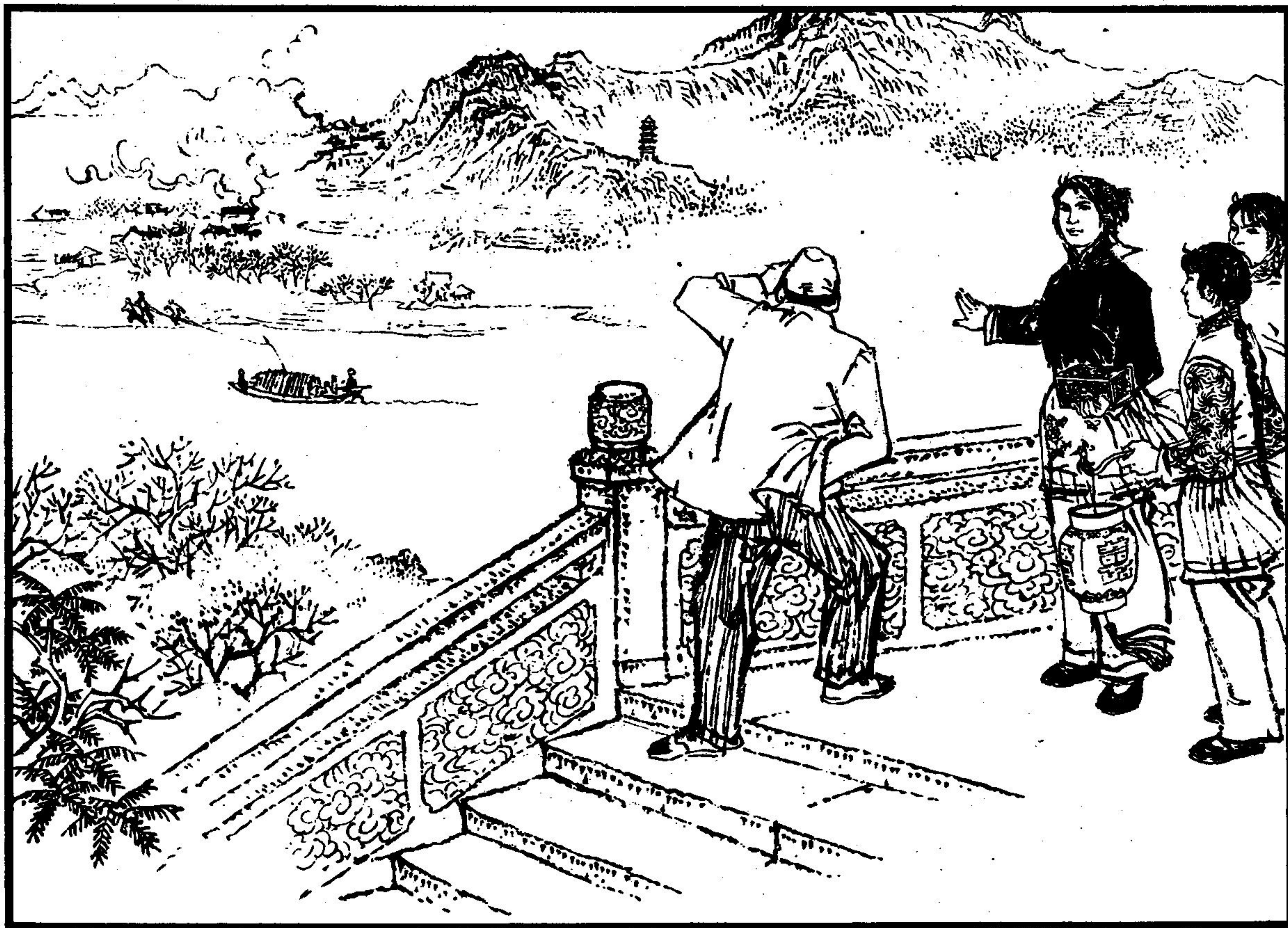
56. The interpreter listened to their bickering. Every sentence struck home. He was in a fix but had to control himself. So he just said: "No more nonsense. Where are you from?"



57. No one listened to him. They were too busy arguing. The interpreter couldn't do anything at all.



58. After a few moments, four more Japanese soldiers ran out to watch the scene. In order to show off and to impress the Japanese, the interpreter tried to threaten the "matron": "Hurry up and tell me — where are you from? The Imperial Army is coming to inspect."



59. Without even throwing him a glance, the "matron" replied: "From Kuangfu Town." The interpreter then asked: "Who is the bride?"



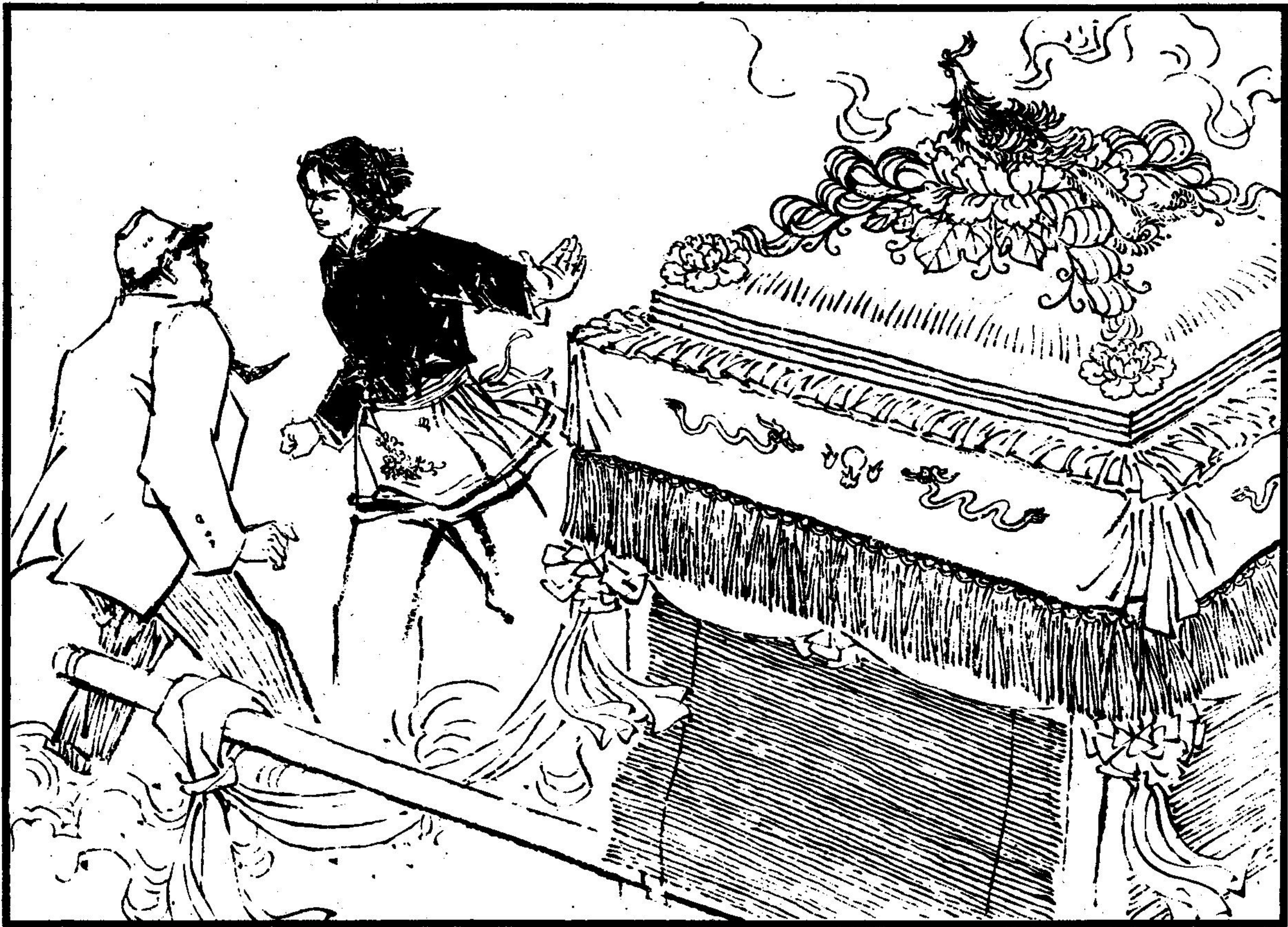
60. She took a large lantern from a girl beside her. On it shone the word "Chia."
"She is from the Chia family, of course."



61. Then he understood. The Chias were Kuangfu's No. 1 family. He said: "So that beauty is going to get married. Who's the lucky bridegroom, then?"



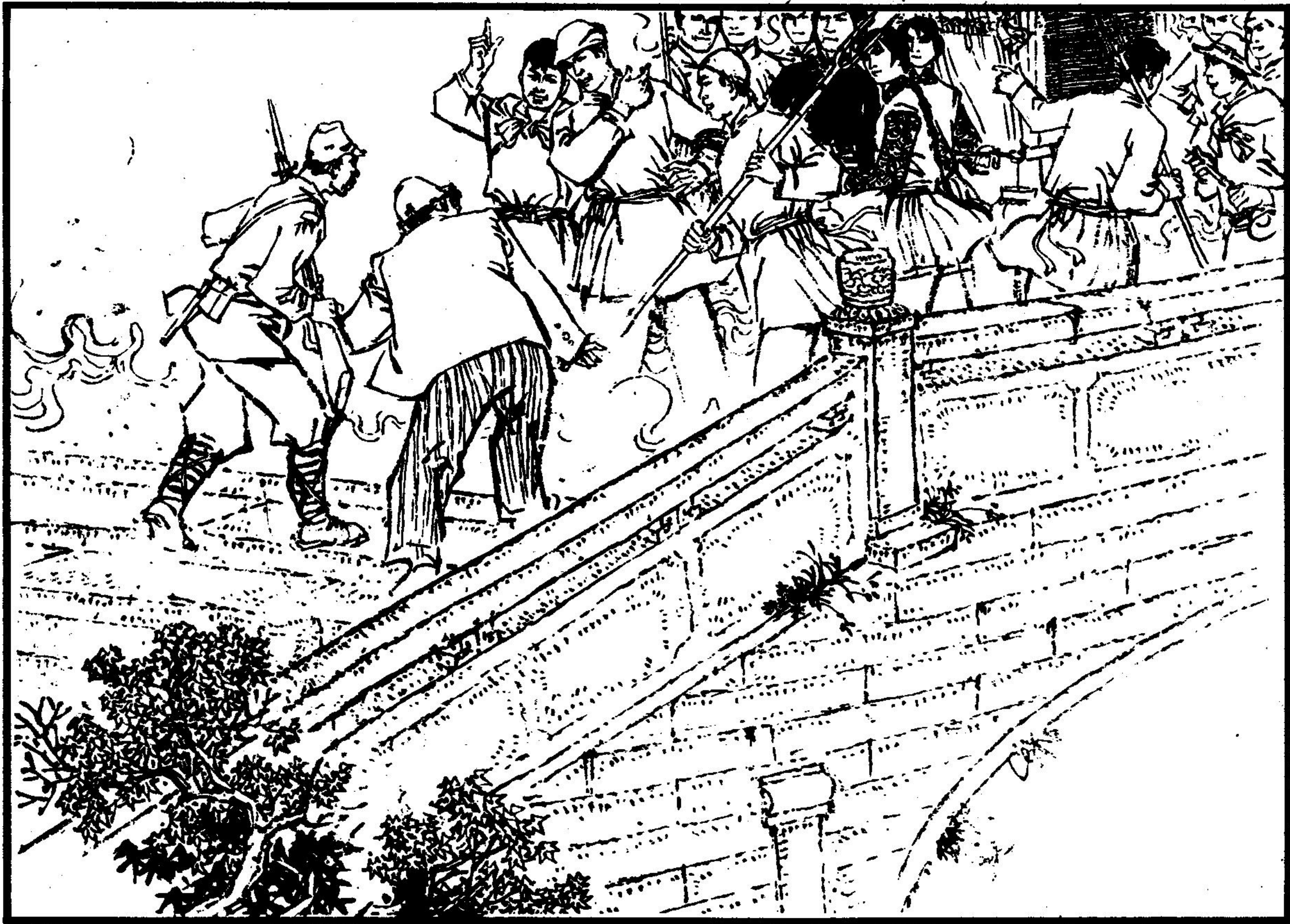
62. She replied: "A perfect match. He's the young master of the Chien family. Who else could be good enough?"



63. He had heard that Miss Chia was extremely beautiful but he had never seen her. "They say that one look is worth a thousand words, and this is the perfect opportunity," he said to himself. Then he stepped closer to pull back the curtain. But the "matron" hurried to stop him.



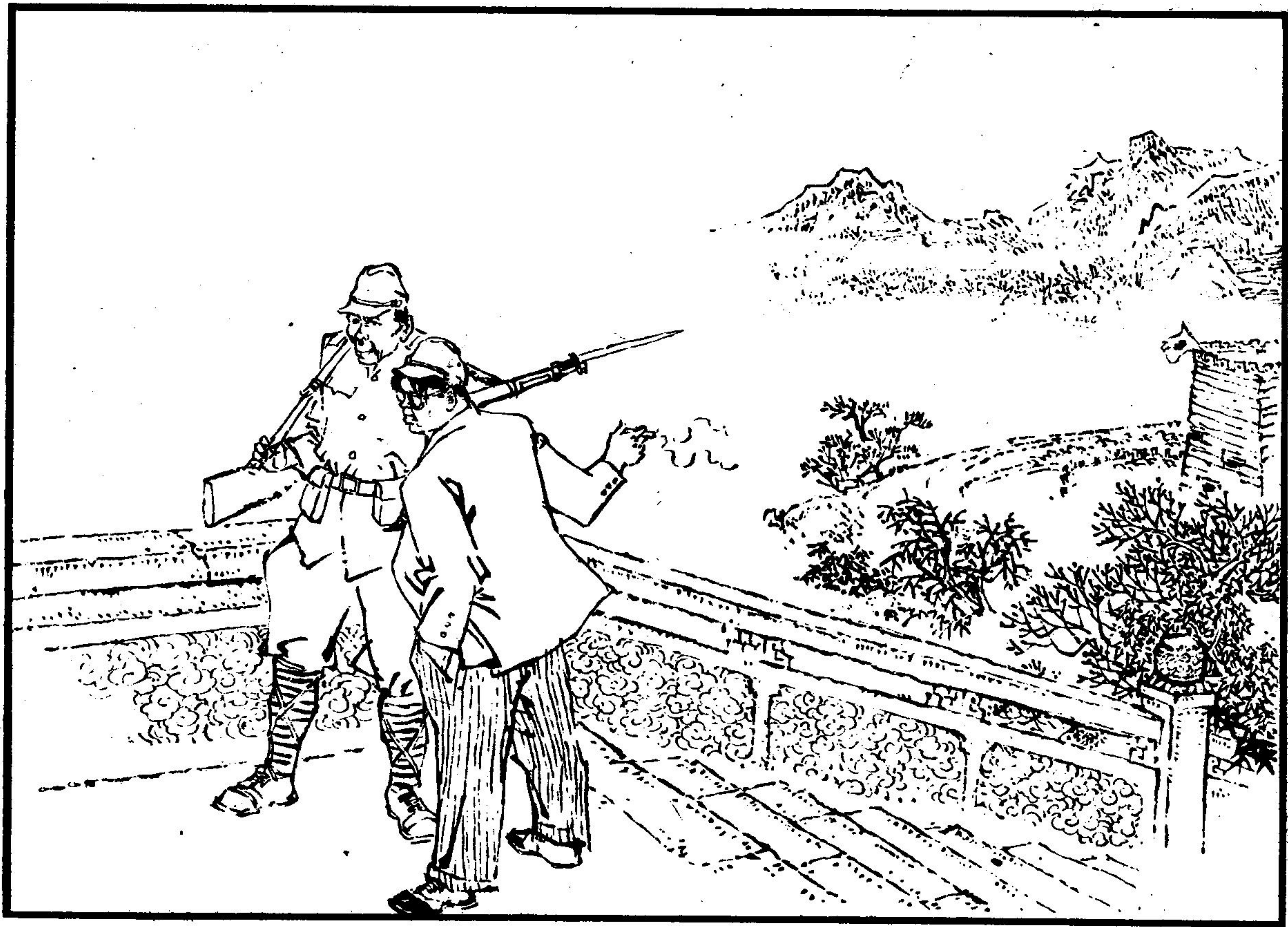
64. With a rascally grin on his face, he said: "Come on. Let's have a look. It's not much to ask." "Sorry, you can't," she countered. "The beauty is shy and timid. I can't be responsible if she is scared."



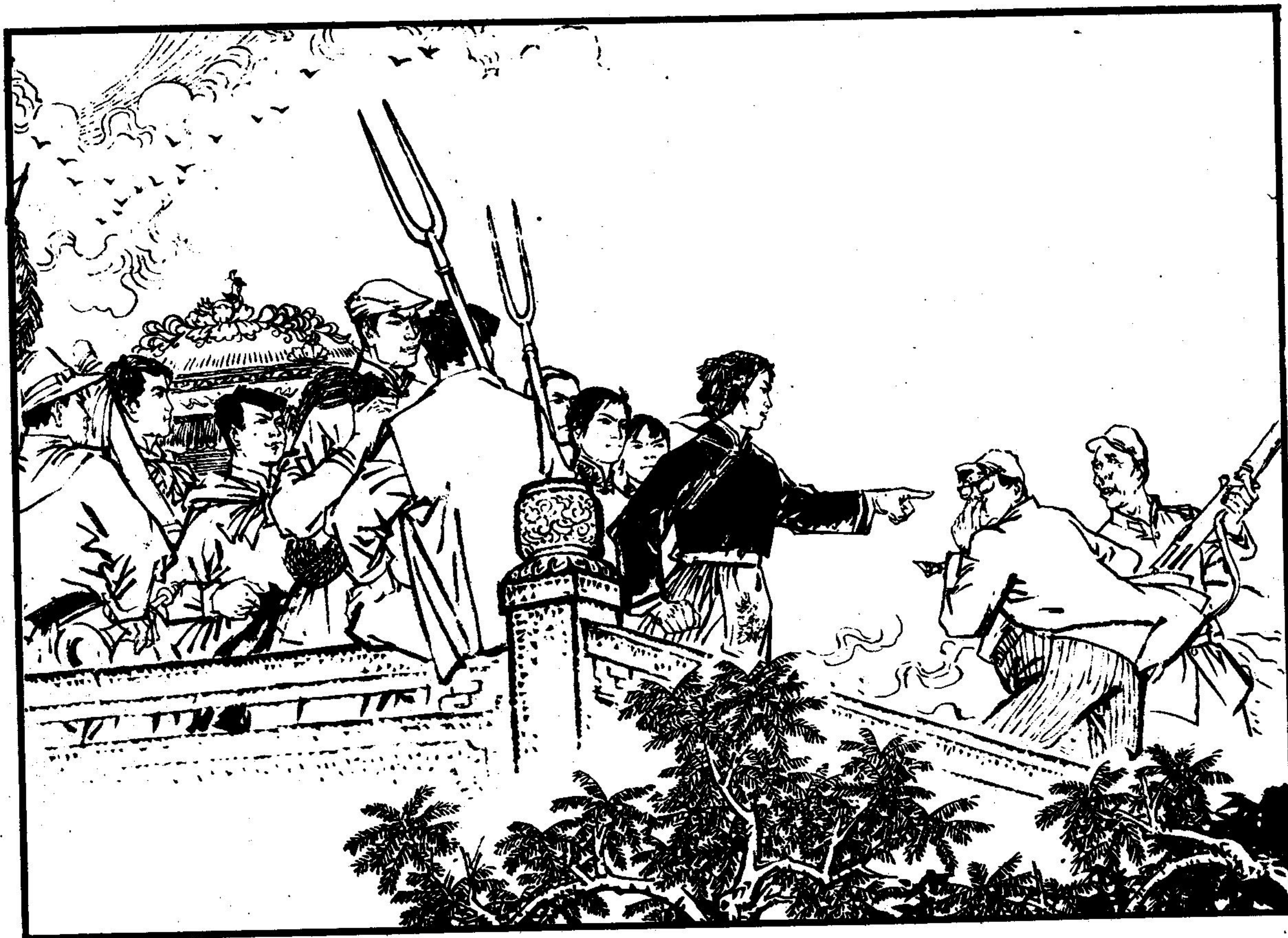
65. Just then, the chair-bearers and buglers, who had stopped arguing with the "head boatman," came to see what had happened. All crying out at once, they said: "Look, Mister, this must stop. Let us pass. It is getting dark."



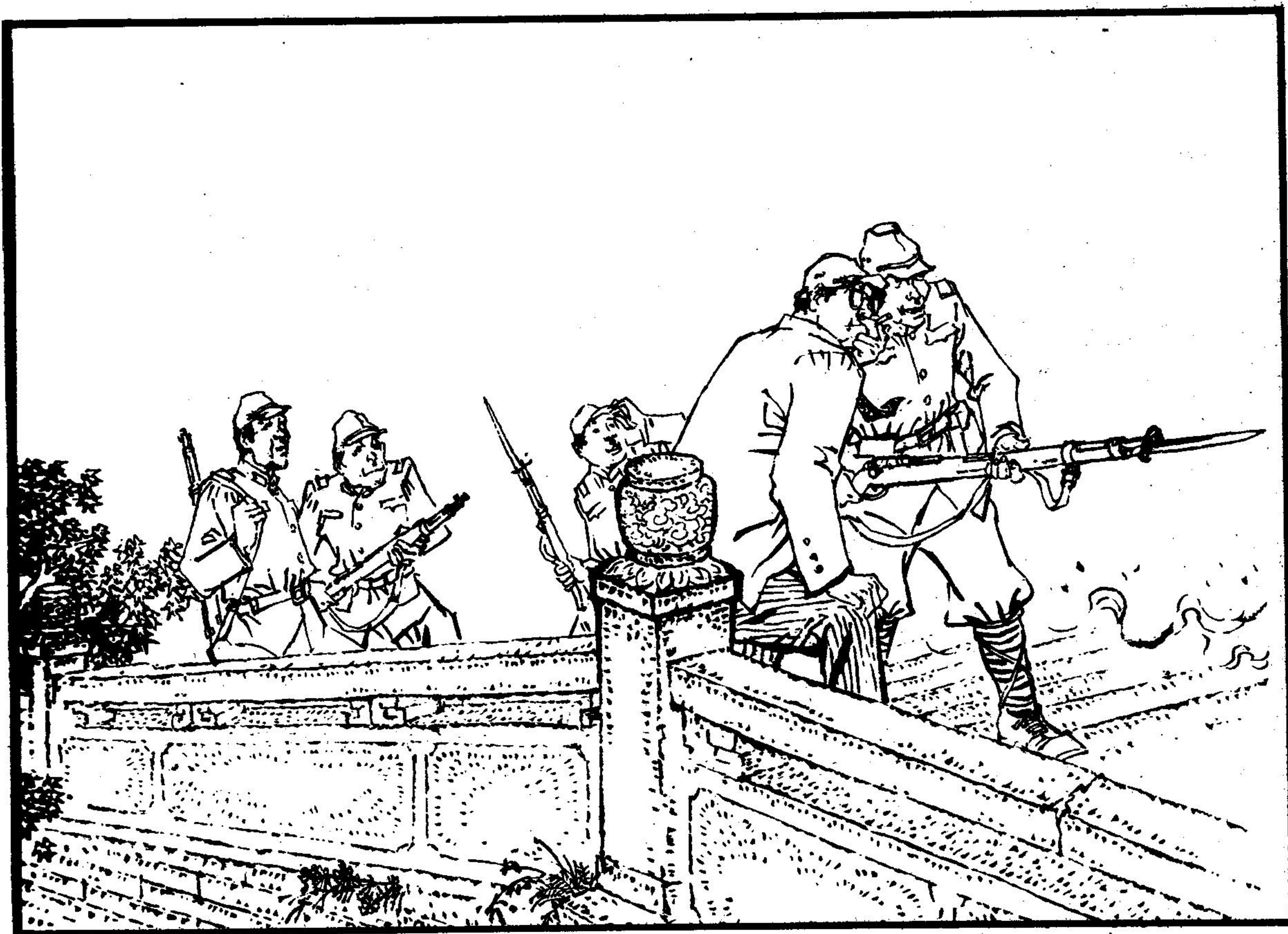
66. The interpreter's face became serious as he said: "I'm acting on the orders of the Imperial Army. Who dares to oppose them? Everyone must be inspected." Hitting upon an idea, the "matron" said in a measured tone: "Sooner or later you're going to run foul of us."



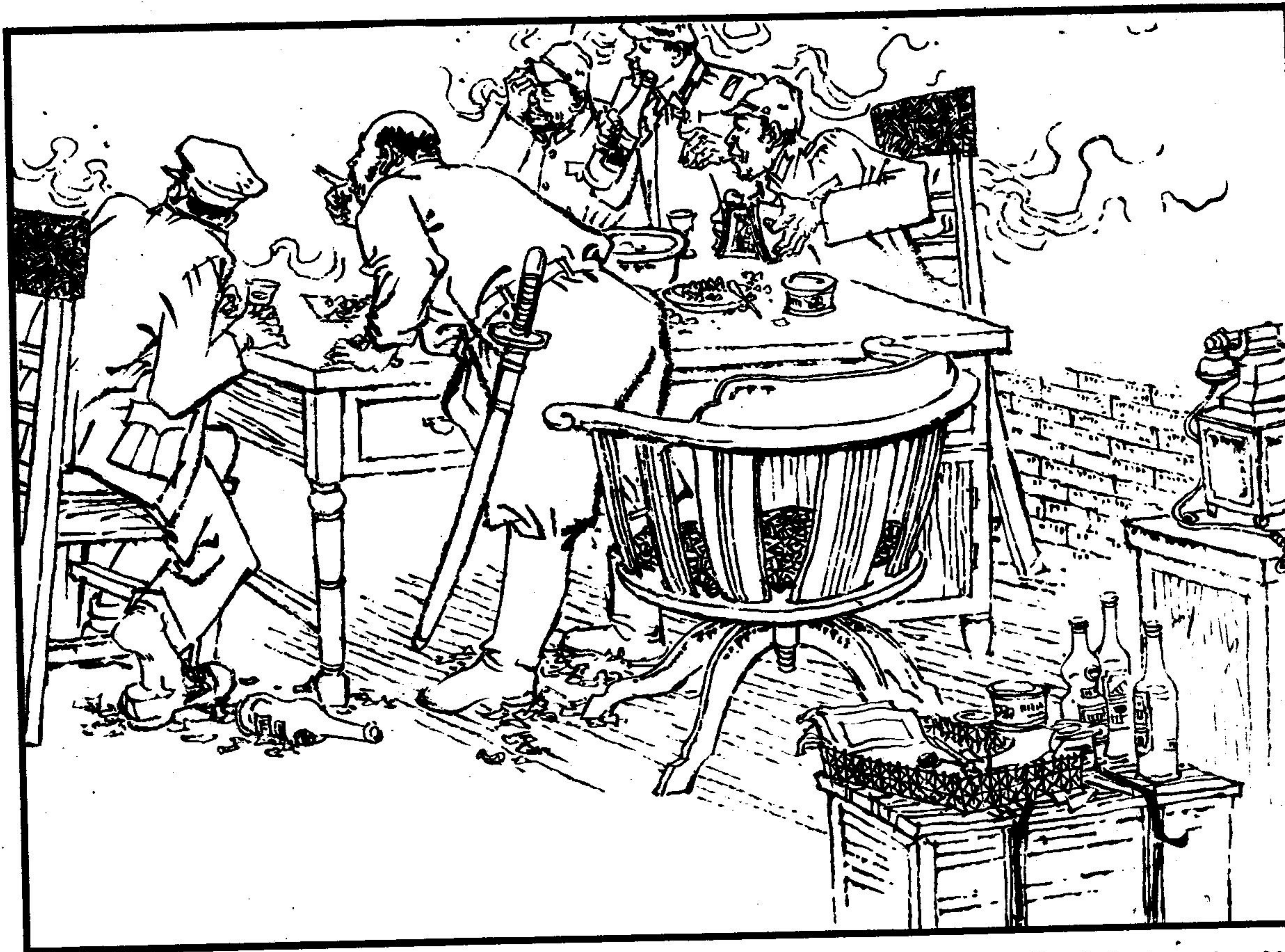
67. He did some quick calculating: Master Chia was a well-known rat and not a good man to cross. But he couldn't afford to act against the Imperial Army's orders. So he demanded in a faltering voice: "But who knows who's in that sedan chair?"



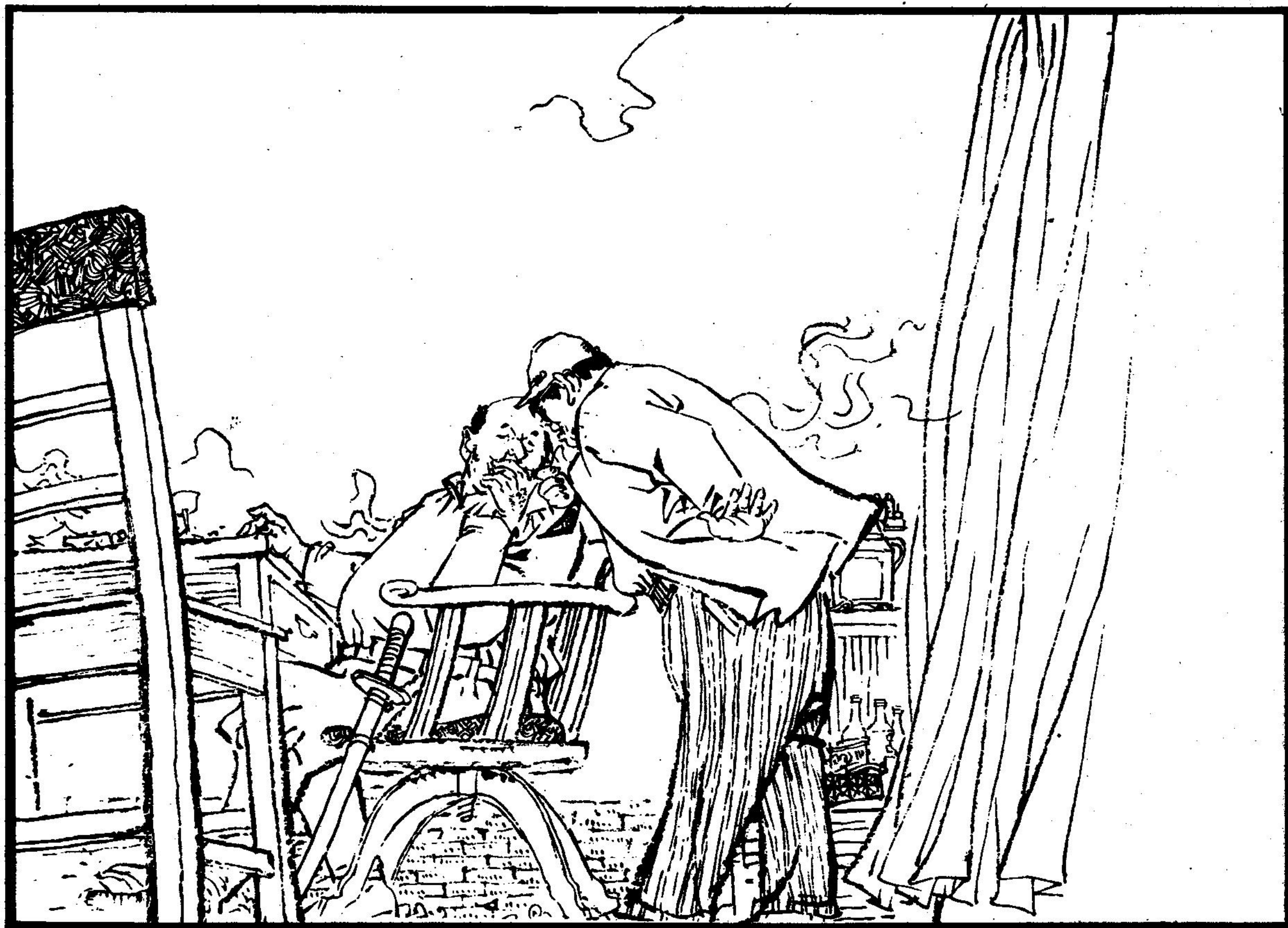
68. She replied: "Who are you trying to impress? Who can make trouble when getting married?" Then shouting towards the sedan, she said: "Miss, don't be anxious. Everything will be OK in a few moments." So saying, she ripped back the curtain to let him have a quick look.



69. As the scene flashed across his eyes, the interpreter felt that the bride really was seated inside. She wore a colourful headcloth and flowered clothes. Stroking his chin, he mumbled a few words to the skinny Japanese soldier. Then he waddled off towards the stronghold.



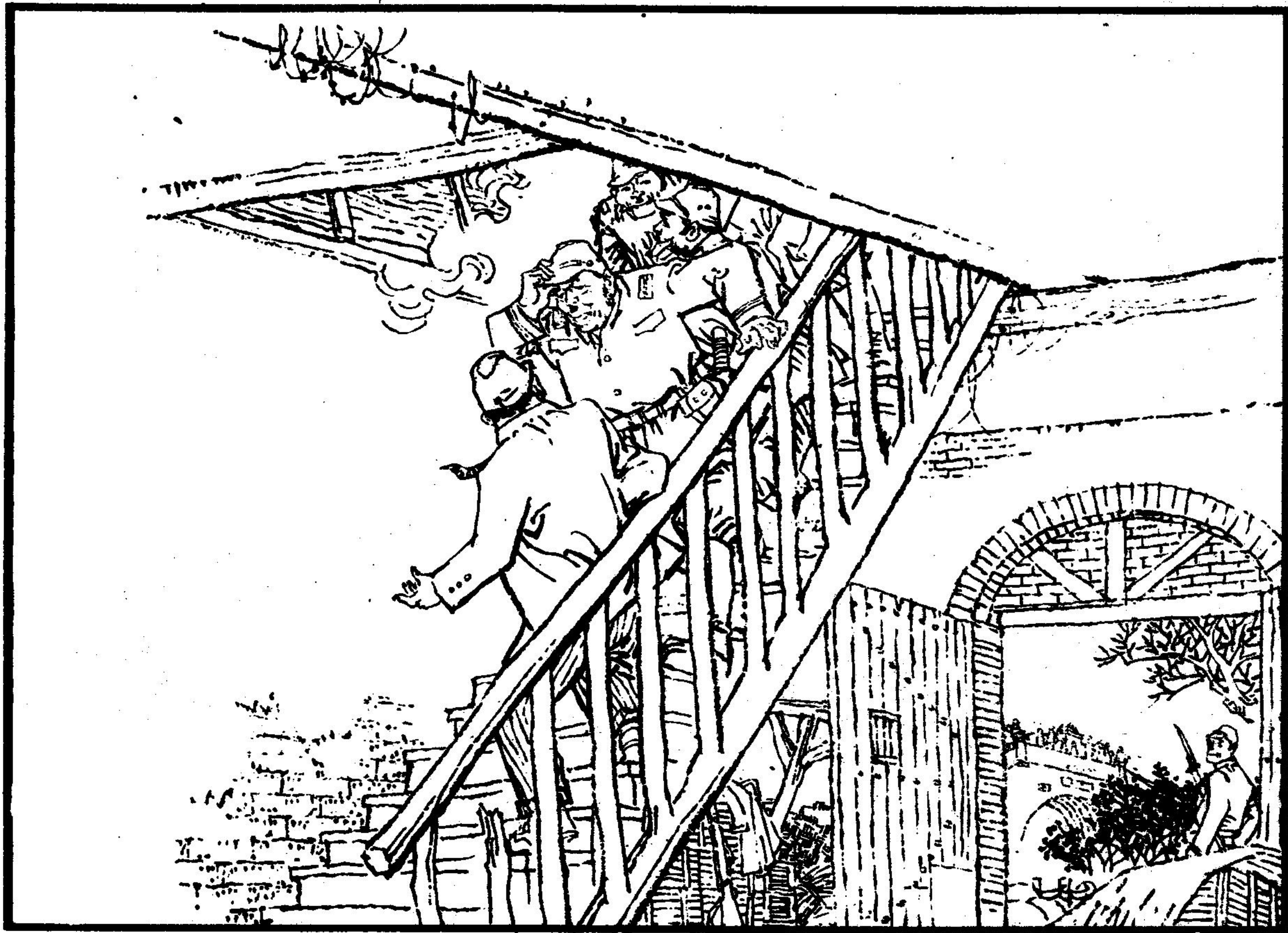
70. When "Barrel" saw that the interpreter was back, he asked: "What's happening?" Throwing out his hands in dismay, he replied: "Your Excellency, it really is a wedding procession, nothing else."



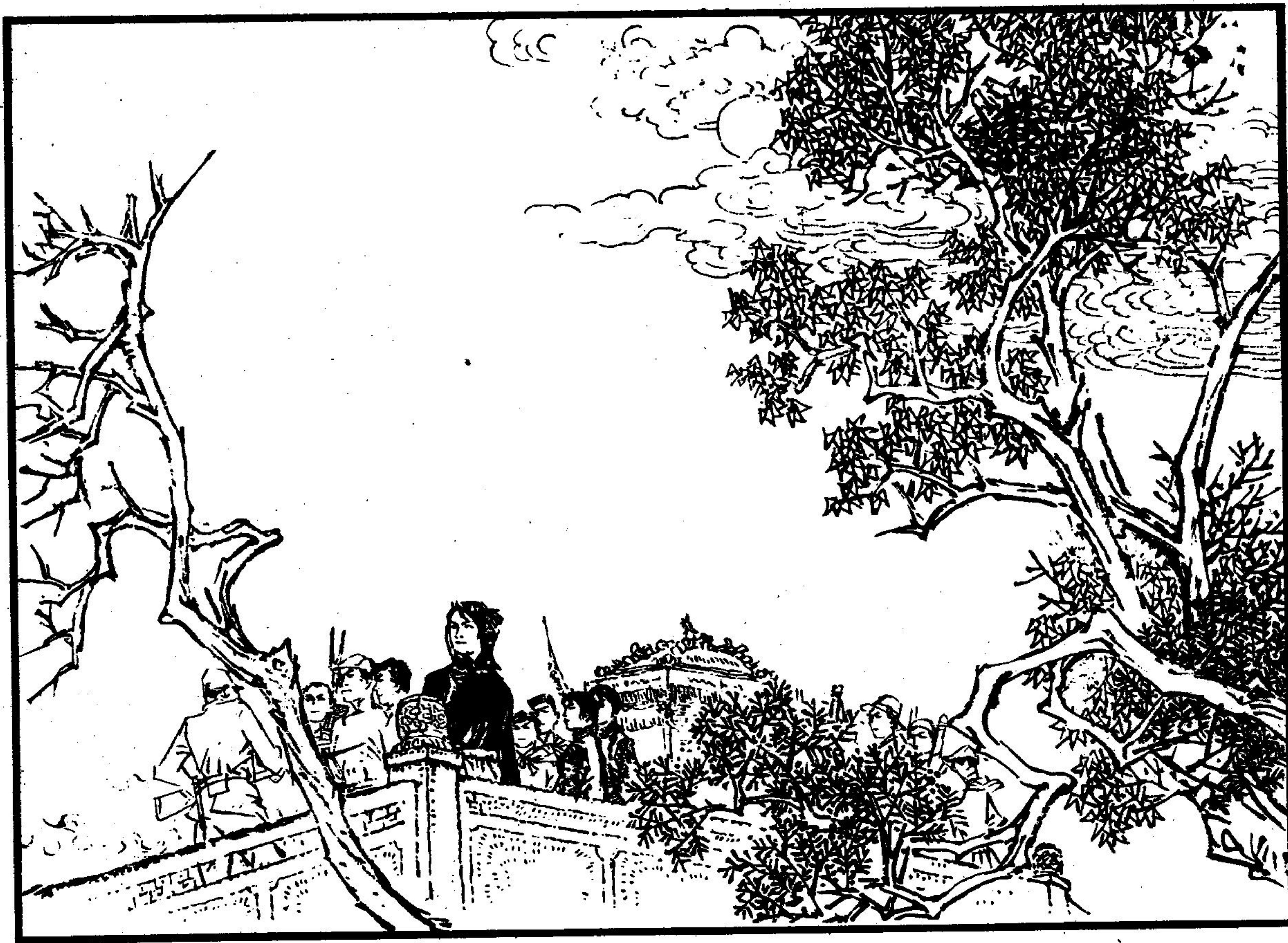
71. "Barrel" still had his doubts. The interpreter stepped closer and, in a fawning voice, said: "Your Excellency, no mistake. This bride is also the area's beauty. I **saw** her myself!"



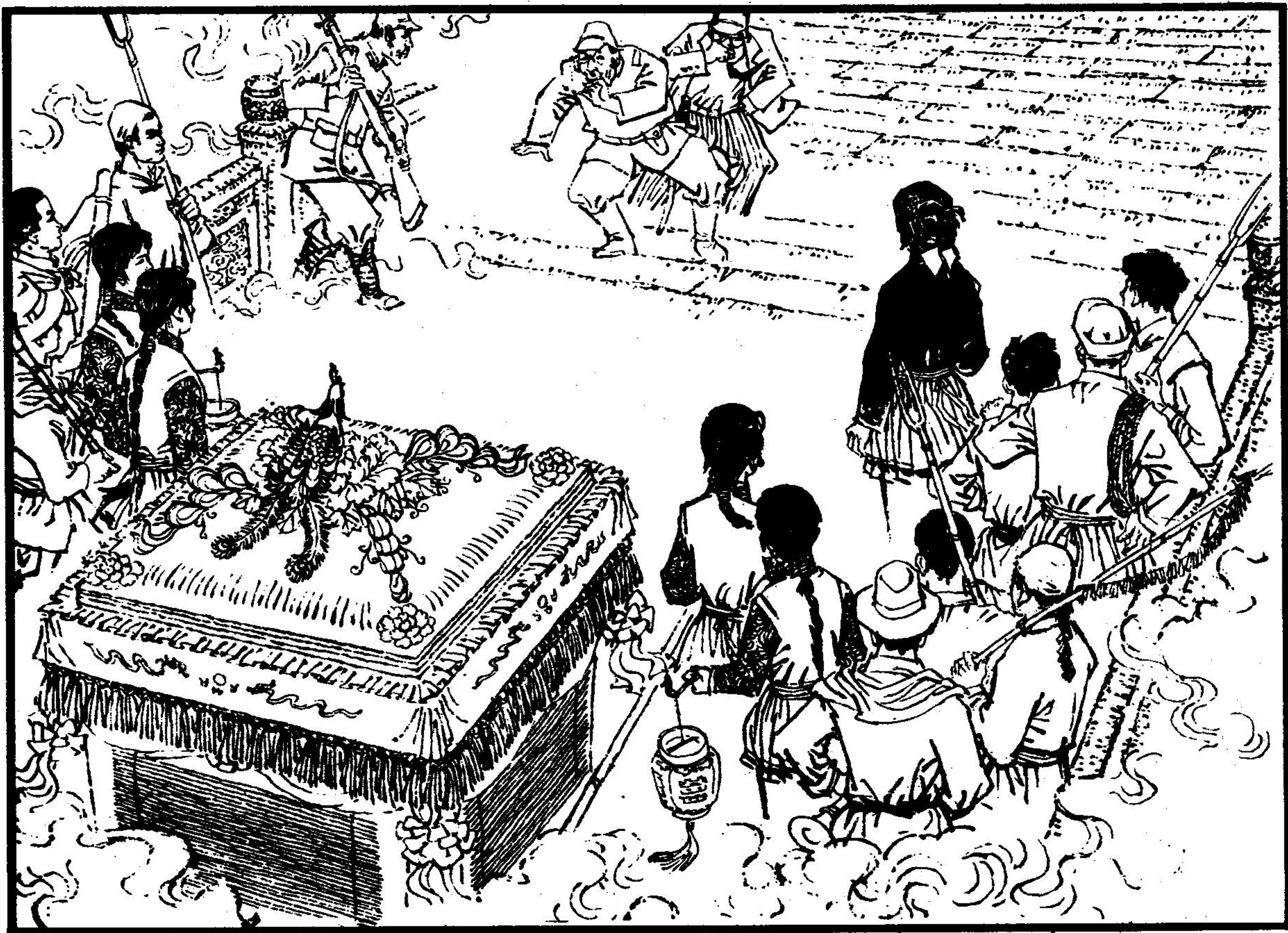
72. When he heard this, all his doubts vanished. Then an evil idea crossed his mind and he said: "Very good! I'll take a look, too."



73. But he was still a bit afraid, so he said to the soldiers: "Everyone follow me." They all rushed towards the door.



74. The moon had already risen. When she was dealing with the enemy on the bridge, the "matron" saw "Barrel" coming out of the stronghold. She was overjoyed.



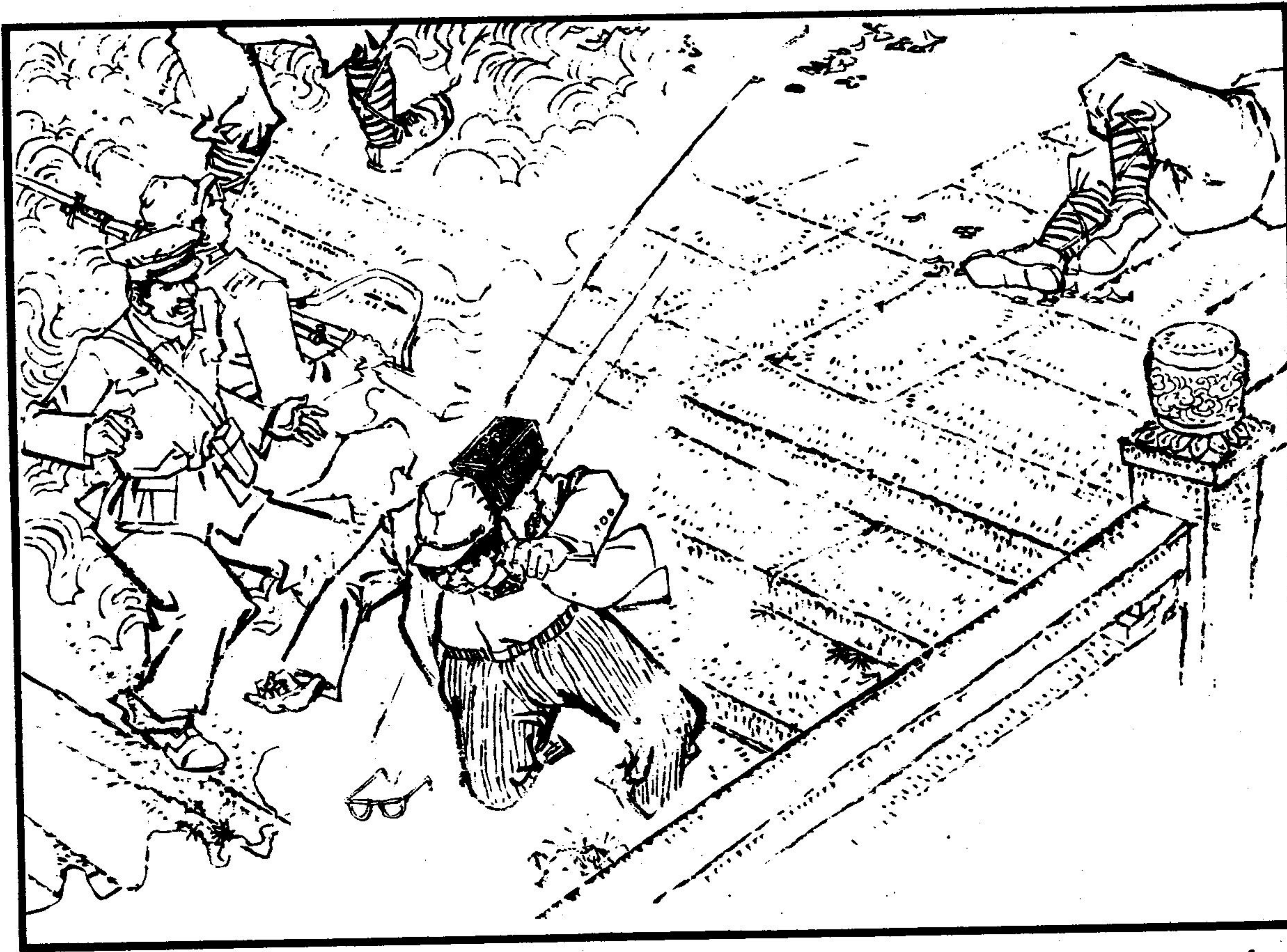
75. "Barrel" drew near and saw that all around were villagers who were sending out a bride. Then all his suspicions evaporated. He rushed up to the sedan chair to draw the curtain.



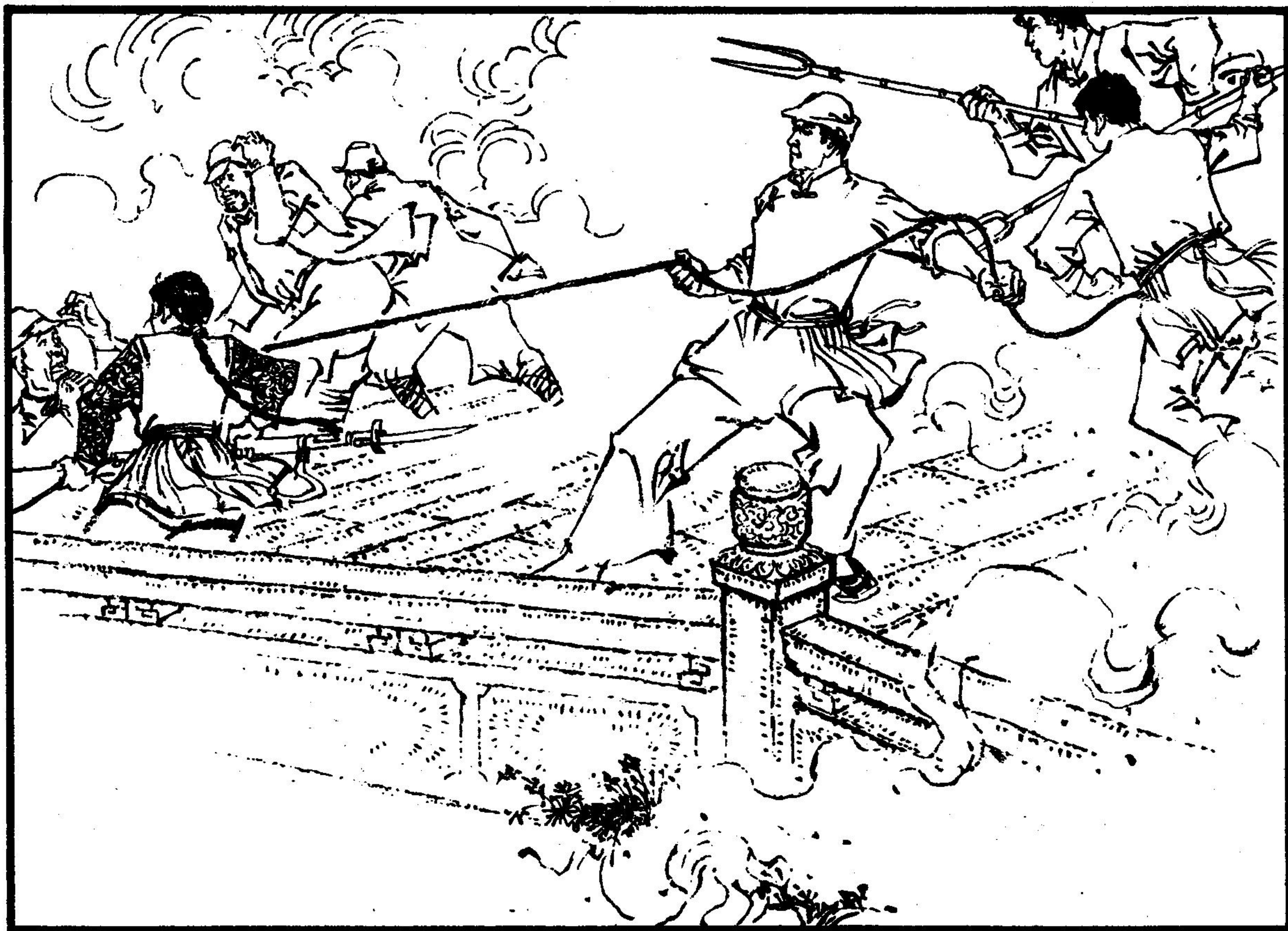
76. The "matron" blocked his way. Her eyes swept all around. Everyone was holding his breath and watching her closely.



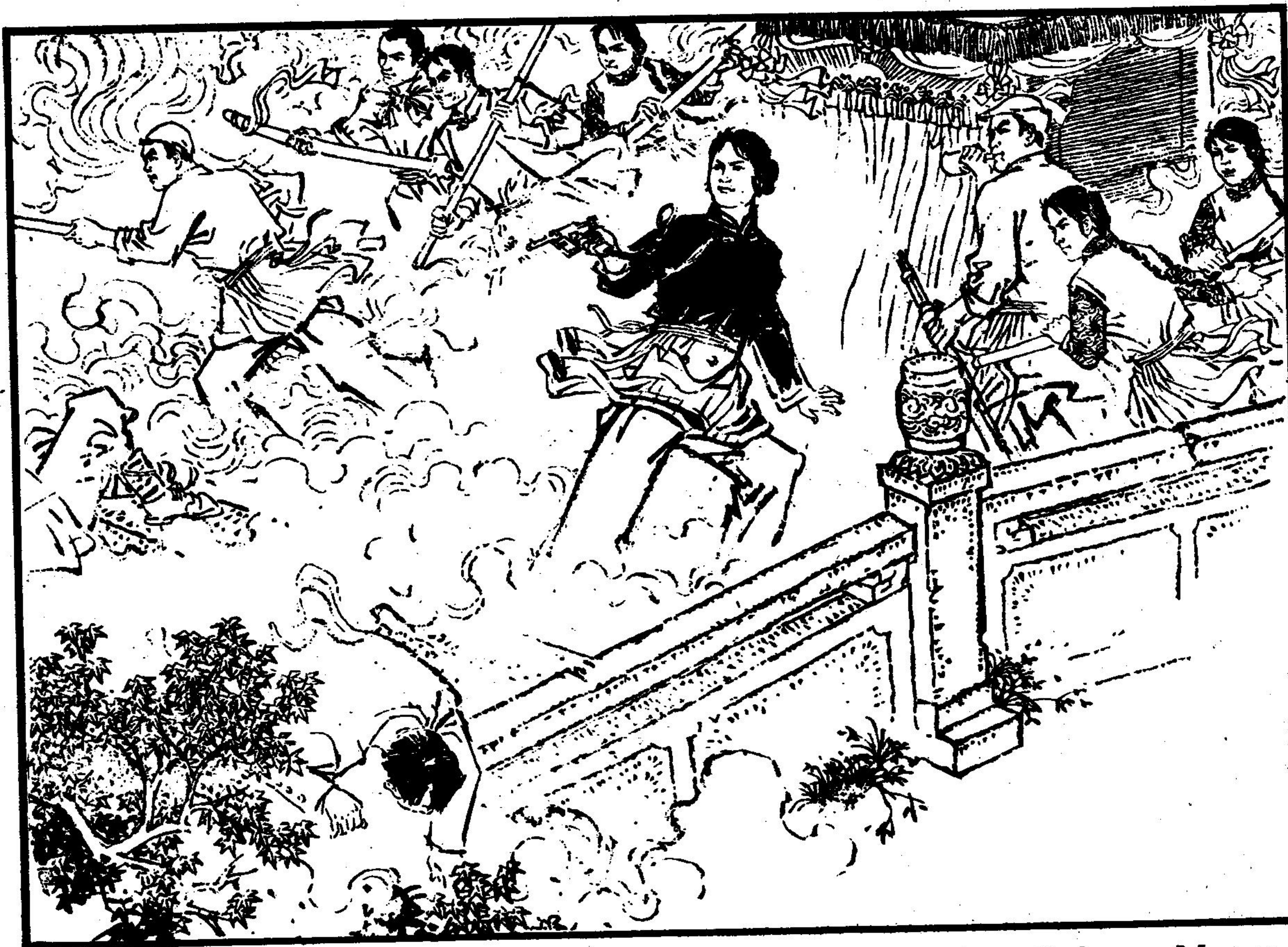
77. They saw her raise her hand, pull off her flowered headcloth and let "Barrel" worm his way into the sedan chair. Then she shouted: "Comrades, fight!"



78. Instantly, the scene became one of tumult. She threw the mahogany box at the interpreter's head. The blow made his head bleed heavily, and he fell to the ground.



79. The skinny Japanese soldier was scared stiff. The "head boatman" used his rope to lasso him around the neck, then tightened it and choked the Japanese to death.



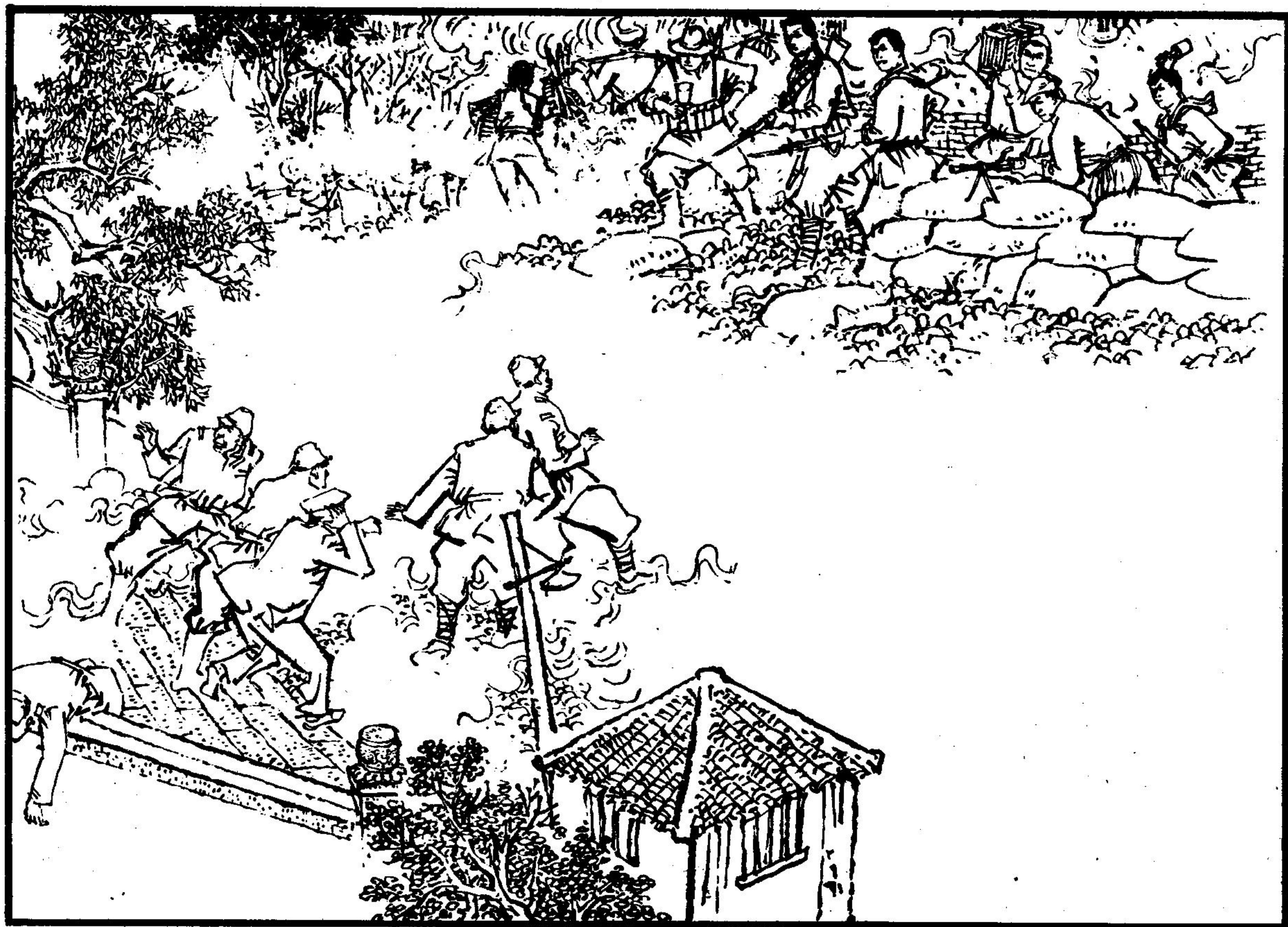
80. Sister Double Happiness' actions were precise and quick. She pulled out a Mauser, aimed at a sentry near the enemy stronghold and whipped off a shot. The sentry dropped to the ground.



81. Some other enemy sentries were just preparing to fire back when the "head boatman" heaved a grenade at them, blowing them to bits.



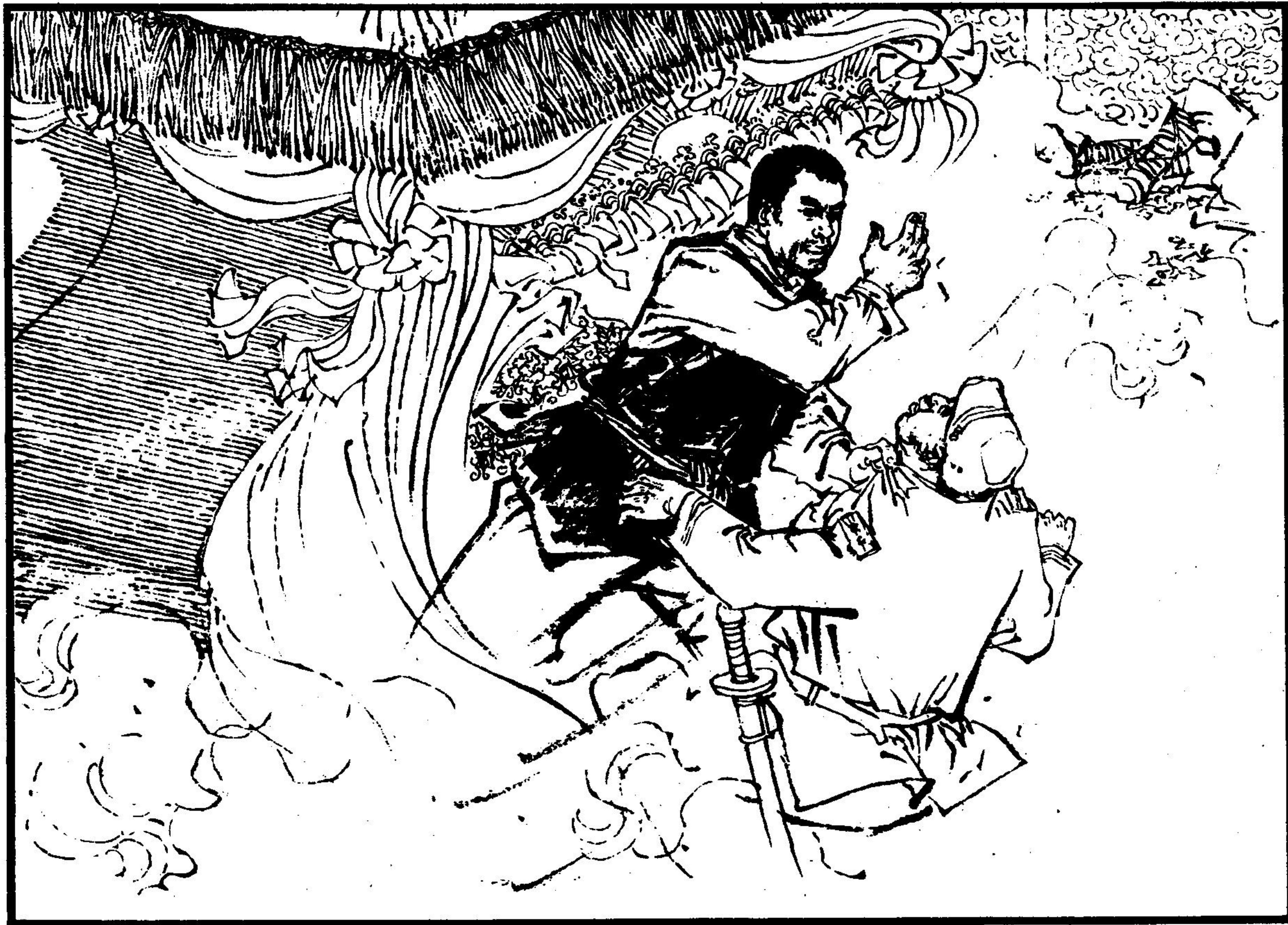
82. Then the chair-bearers, boatmen and all the others, rushed up with their fishing spears and shoulder poles. Calling out their battle-cry, they charged the enemy.



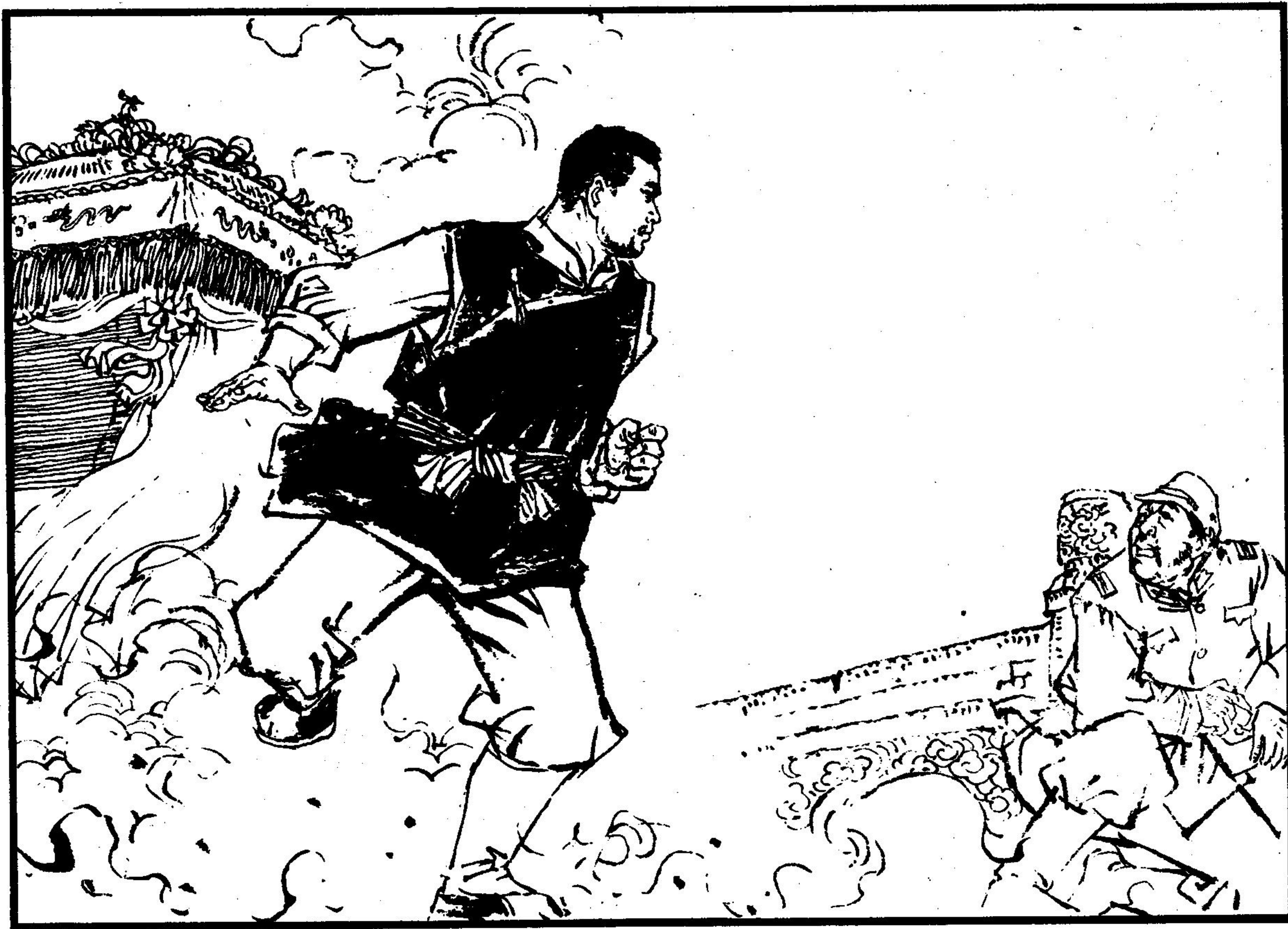
83. The enemy discovered that they had been fooled. They thought of retreating to the stronghold to get their guns, but the bridge was tightly sealed and the way to their lair was blocked.



84. The "onlookers" also joined in fighting the enemy.



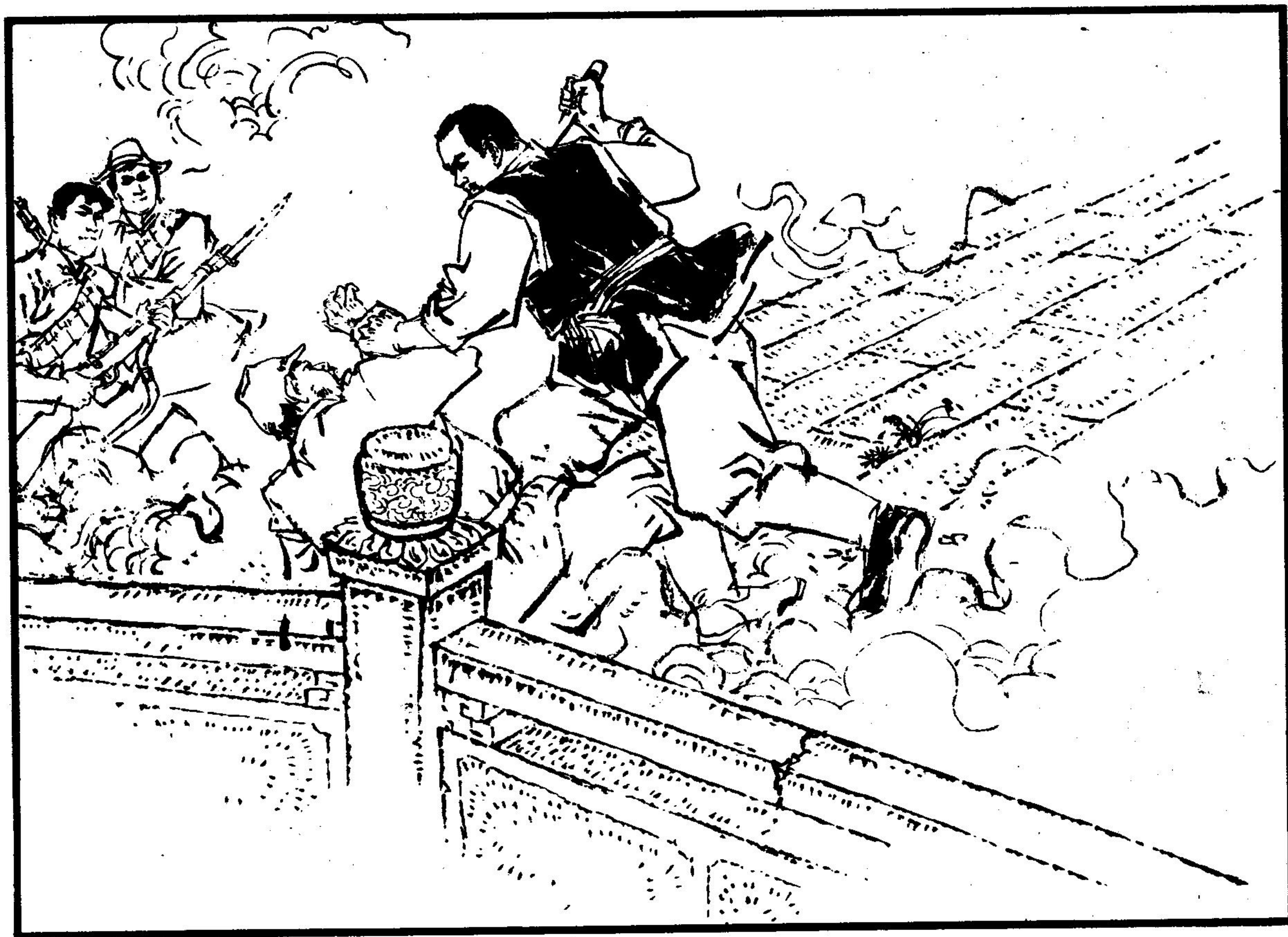
85. "Barrel," who was squeezing his way into the sedan chair, had just loosened the bride's headcloth. My God! What kind of a beauty this "bride" was! "She" turned out to be a hairy, dark-skinned man who began to cry out: "You swine, Black Bull's been waiting for you for so long." He then started to lay about the Japanese officer.



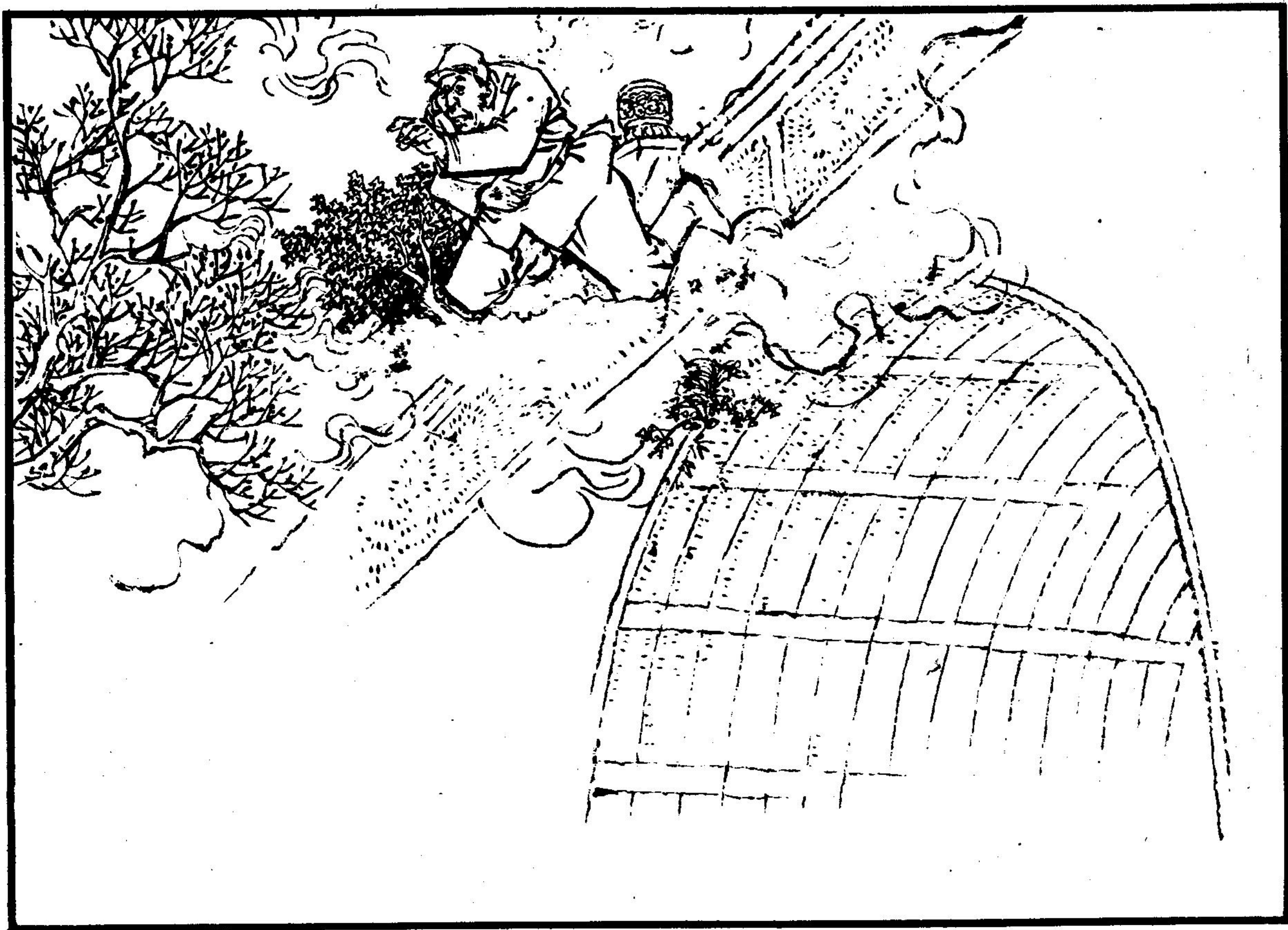
86. "Barrel" staggered under the blows and woke out of his drunken stupor. He quickly rolled to one side and pulled out his pistol.



87. Black Bull let loose with a kick, and "Barrel's" pistol went flying. Rushing up, Black Bull picked him up and threw him onto the bridge.



88. "Barrel's" head spun and his eyes saw black. Fighting madly for his life, he tried to get away. Black Bull pulled out a dagger and stabbed him.



89. "Barrel" cried out in pain and, bent double, fell into the river.



90. "Where are you going?" Black Bull shouted. Throwing out his arms, he jumped in after him.



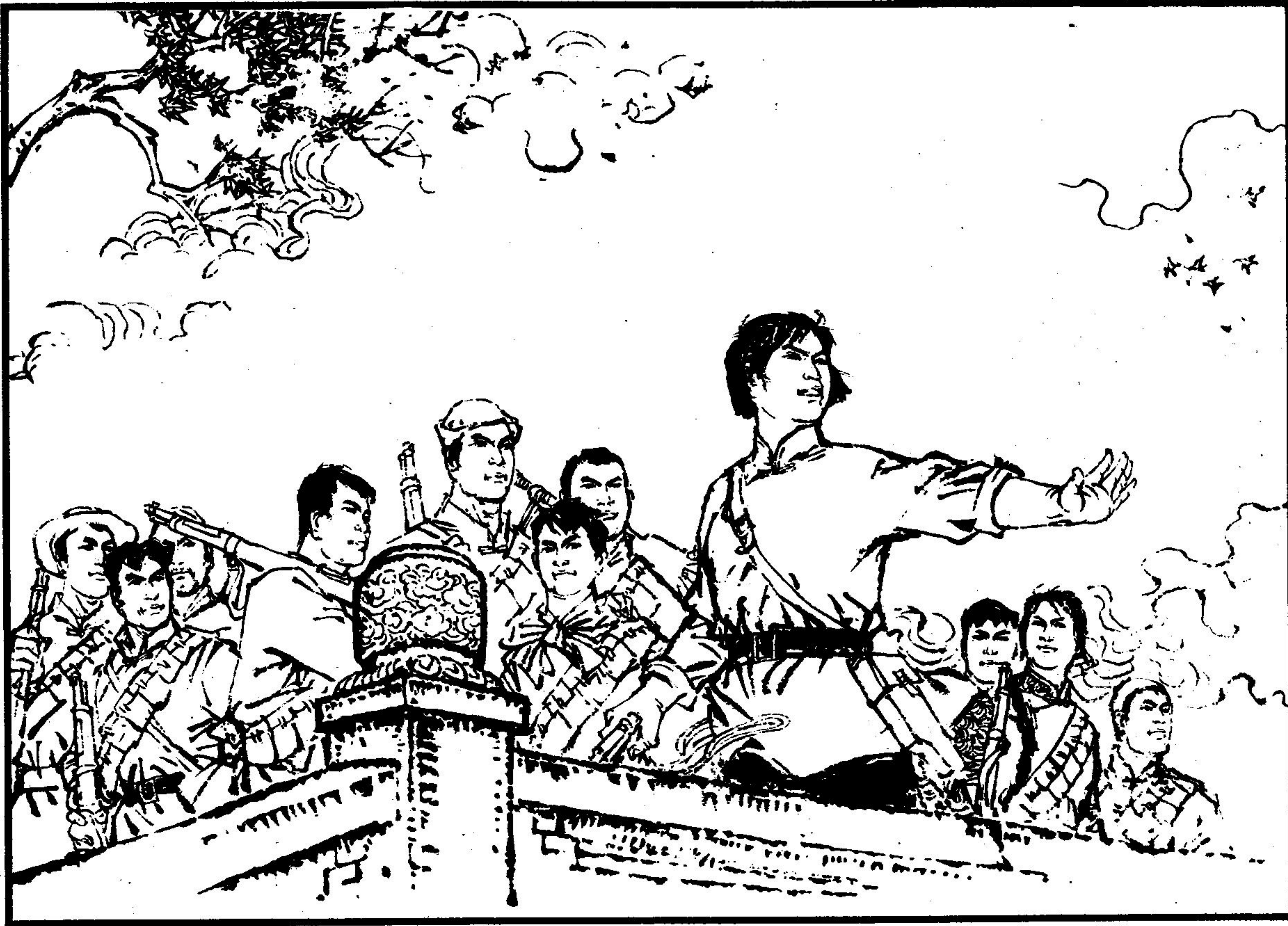
91. Black Bull was a good swimmer. He surged forward and grabbed "Barrel." Raising his dagger, he gave him a few savage thrusts. The river waters turned red.



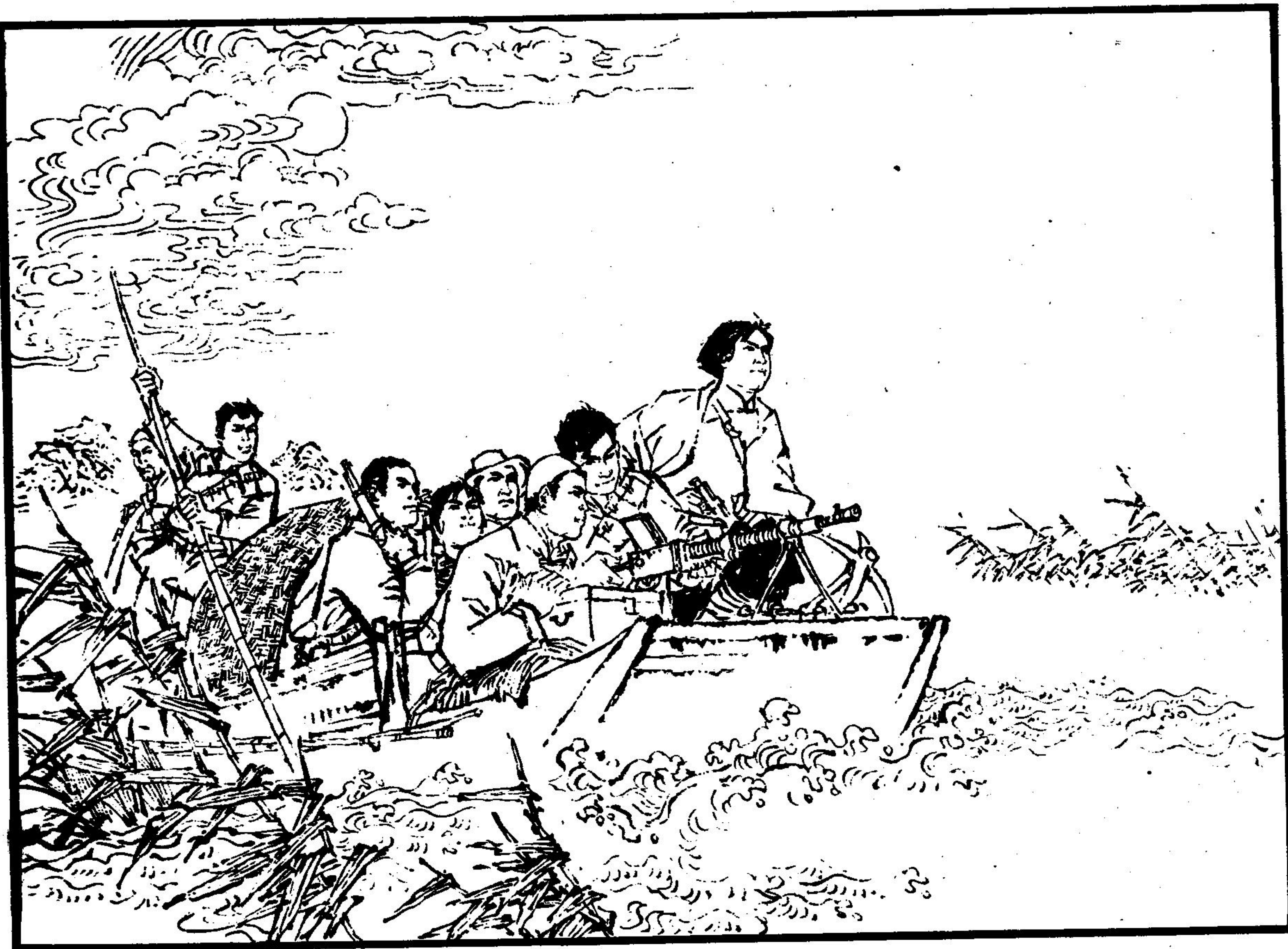
92. It was a quick and clean battle. Within half an hour, all the enemy at Dragon Pool Bridge had been wiped out. Ta-kang and the other comrades collected and placed the captured machine-guns, rifles and ammo-cases in the boat.



93. Black Bull was completely soaked but happy. He raised a captured pistol and said: "Killed a Japanese and got a gun. This is really double happiness."



94. Now, from the distance came the sound of heavy gunfire. Sister Double Happiness' spirits rose. "Our guerrillas are attacking the enemy stronghold in the town," she said. "The power of Chairman Mao's idea on people's war is tremendous. Let's keep on fighting for the revolution. Now, Ta-kang, take a squad and wait in ambush here.



95. The great earth was bathed in the moonlight. The night wind blew softly. Having wiped out the enemy's Dragon Pool Bridge stronghold, Sister Double Happiness and her comrades, militant and high-spirited, set out for new battle assignments.

